

Minutes from a Meeting of the Concordia Council on Student Life
Held on November 30, 2007
SGW Campus H-769 10:00 a.m.

PRESENT: Mr. Roger Côté, Chair, Mr. David Baker, Secretary, Ms. Katie Sheahan, Dr. Sup Mei Graub, Ms. Louyse Lussier, Ms. Brigitte St. Laurent, Ms. Melanie Drew, Ms. Laura Stanbra, Ms. Anna Barrafato, Mr. Elie Chivi, Mr. Zach Battat, Mr. Noah Stewart, Ms. Leah del Vecchio, Ms. Ruirui Zhu, Ms. Claudie Boujaklian, Mr. William Curran, Ms. Katherine Hedrich, Ms. Marilyn Lessard, Ms. Lorraine Toscano, Dr. Monica Mulrennan, Ms. Lina Lipscombe, Dr. Fran Shaver, Mr. Guy Fontaine

ABSENT WITH REGRETS: Mr. Owen Moran, Ms. Daniela Caputo, Mr. JaeWoo Kim, Mr. Majid Behbahani, Mr. Jermaine McFarlane

ABSENT: Ms. Rose Wangechi

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Chair called the meeting to order and moved on to the first item on the agenda.

Ms. del Vecchio moved to approve the agenda and Ms. Lussier seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR

The Chair informed Council that the CSU held their elections on November 27, 28 and 29 and mentioned that the results were announced the day before. Ms. del Vecchio mentioned that the vacant positions on CSU Council were filled by CSU supported candidates. There were several referendum questions which also passed. The CSU was looking to clarify the wording in their Constitution:

The Chair clarified that the Dean of Students Office should be given the results shortly in order for the new fee increases to pass at the next Board of Governors meeting in mid-December.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE MEETING OF OCTOBER 26TH 2007

There were no comments on the minutes.

Mr. Battat moved to approve the minutes and Ms. del Vecchio seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The Chair pointed out that a motion did not need to be put forward regarding the letter to the Board of Governors with recommendations from CCSL. As such, a letter has been drafted by the Chair. Ms. del Vecchio agreed that the

letter was in the spirit of Mr. Stewart's motion. The Chair asked Council if they would like to submit the letter as is to the Board of Governors. Council agreed to send the letter as is.

The Chair had followed up with Mr. Moran regarding the Take the Stairs Campaign. The question was, were there any impediments for art work to be displayed and music to be played in staircases, and Mr. Lanthier of Environmental Health and Safety said there were none, so the project can move forward. The Chair asked Ms. Boujaklian if she could liaise with Facilities regarding this project and get back to Council. After this, Mr. Moran will begin implementing the project.

Signage was suggested to be written in such a way as to entice people to use the stairs. Perhaps something motivational like: "Please take the Stairs" rather than just "Stairs" with an arrow pointing. Ms. Boujaklian mentioned that Facilities has put up signage in the elevators of the GM building that asks people to use the stairs if they are only going up one or two flights, and the signage mentions that it is good for your health to do so. Once the work on the elevators in the Hall building are done, the same signage will go up there.

Ms. Lipscombe remarked on the fact that at the last meeting double sided photocopying was discussed. She mentioned that she was working on getting support from R4 to have all their photocopy machines only print double sided unless asked otherwise. Dr Shaver mentioned that she is working on the faculty side of allowing students to print their essays double sided.

5. REPORTS AND ITEMS OF INFORMATION

Ms Sheahan gave Council a report on the Awareness sub-committee of CCSL. Chris Mota will fill the Communications position on the sub-committee and Lisa Graves will fill the IITS position. During the meeting, the sub-committee discussed 58 ideas and came up with the following five goals:

1. Collect data on what is currently being done to raise awareness
2. Develop branding for family of Student Services to enable us to communicate efficiently
3. Create a one stop shopping approach
4. Reach 100 percent of students to raise awareness of Student Services
5. Direct energies towards efforts that stand the test of time

These ideas will be given a timeline in order to move quickly on this agenda.

Ms. Lussier updated Council on the Special Projects meeting that happened earlier in the week. There was only one Student Initiated Project that was submitted and approved for 12 000\$ in funding. Roughly 50 projects were also given funding. 34 000\$ has so far been allocated, and late projects were to be reviewed within the coming week.

6. AGENDA PRIORITIES FOR 2007-2008 CCSL MEETINGS

The Chair asked Council if there were any new issues they would like to prioritize for the upcoming semester. None were discussed.

7. STUDENT LIFE ISSUES

7.1 Student Success

The Chair asked if Council would like to discuss the presentations given at the last meetings. A discussion ensued regarding the statistics from Mr. Tucker's presentation. Ms. del Vecchio and Mr. Stewart gave the CSU's opinion on student debt. They re-iterated that they were surprised by the data Mr. Tucker presented on student debt. According to Statistics Canada, the average debt incurred by a Canadian student was 28 000\$ for undergraduate students and 14 000\$ for a Masters student, and 20 000\$ for a PhD student. They mentioned that Quebec is a poor province compared to other Canadian provinces. They also mentioned that society benefits when students have a good education/job and that stats from the Ministry of Education say that whenever tuition increases, the drop-out rate

also increases. Quebec tuition has been kept low because Quebec students have been fighting for low-tuition, and it is within the University's interest to do the same.

Ms. Barrafato commented that retention is not always an issue of finances, but that other aspects of retention should be looked at, such as students waiting too long to seek academic help. Mr. Stewart agreed that CCSL should look at all aspects of retention to see how Council can tackle these issues.

The Chair commented that there are different ways to support students, and asks how CCSL can facilitate things for students in need, whether it is financial or otherwise. Each department is there to support their students, whether it is the Office for Students with Disabilities, or Recreation and Athletics who supports their athletes, or Financial Aid who supports students in financial constraint. When it comes to services, we have to target certain groups. Dr. Shaver mentioned that many professors do not feel it is their job to inform students of the services available at the University. Dr. Mulrennan suggested to perhaps offer an information session, in an informal setting, offered to both faculty and services.

Ms. Zhu gave a report on the CSU tutoring services. She thanked Dr. Graub and Counseling and Development for their help in getting the tutoring centre started. They were offering a crash class for the final exam period. She mentioned that the CSU has a short and long-term plan for the tutoring centre. Their long-term plan is to hire Concordia students to tutor Concordia students. Ms. Zhu had been visiting classes to inform students of the new tutoring centre. She had encountered various obstacles when quite a number of professors in quite an abrupt manner, denied her from visiting their class. She asked for help in finding alternate ways to communicate with professors and students. Mr. Chivi commented that faculty should also be informed on the importance of student life, since many do not feel that it can be just as important as the academic side of education.

Ms. Sheahan mentioned that there was no common training for faculty or frontline staff and suggested that perhaps a new committee be set up to tackle this problem. She would be happy to chair this sub-committee.

The Chair summarized the discussion by saying that Concordia is very multi-dimensional in its approach. More awareness of services needs to be created across the institution. How do you reach more of the community? How do you connect everyone together (faculty to faculty, student to student, student to faculty). The challenge lies in that Concordia is such a large community. Senate is a very good place to start, as they should be interested in student success and retention as well as curriculum changes. The Academic Deans should also be included in the discussions. Academic advisors are a great target audience to spread the word on services available at Concordia.

Dr. Mulrennan said that some departments are very spread out and take a one size fits all approach. They do not necessarily take people's lives into consideration (daycare, disability etc.). She suggested that perhaps a survey could be prepared to find out how other departments work. This would be a good start in order to create a dialogue with other departments.

Ms. Lipscombe pointed out that CCSL has provided many important services, such as money given to student projects, and to the Office of Students with Disabilities for their computer labs. A lot of information has already been disseminated by CCSL and Council should be proud of its achievements.

7.2 Off-Campus Housing/Job Bank Presentation (Jonathan Elston)

Mr. Elston was unavailable to make the presentation, which will be given at the next meeting in January.

8. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Curran updated Council on restricted access to the Library during the exam period. His department did a four day 24 hour access pilot project. It worked very well and they will now aim for a similar 24 hour access during the

Spring exam period, but this time for a three week period. He requested that the CSU give him the dates they would like to see this in effect.

The Libraries also have four new seminar rooms.

Lastly, due to the issue of damaged books, the Libraries are giving out re-usable bags for student to carry Library books in.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Concordia Council on Student Life is to be held on January 25th 2008 at 10:00 a.m. in L-AD-308.

10. TERMINATION OF MEETING

Mr. Stewart motioned to adjourn and Ms. del Vecchio seconded the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.